

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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AID-05 DHA-02 ORM-02 AF-06 /103 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6524

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 17528

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PLO, US, XF

SUBJECT: SAUNDERS TESTIMONY ON PLO AND AN IRAQI JEWISH
REACTION TO IT

REF: STATE 268095

1. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE (REFTEL) WAS PICKED UP ON NOVEMBER 13 BY LONDON FINANCIAL TIMES WHOSE WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, DAVID BELL, REPORTED "THE US NOW APPEARS TO BE MOVING TOWARD A GREATER RECOGNITION THAT THE PALESTINIANS MUST BE GIVEN SOME KIND OF VOICE IN THE NEAR EAST NEGOTIATION PROCESS." BELL CONTINUES THAT WHILE THIS NEW CONCERN REPRESENTS "LITTLE MORE THAN A CHANGE IN TONE," IT REFLECTS CONCERN OVER THE SYRIAN ATTITUDE AND FOLLOWS SADAT'S EMPHASIS ON THE PALESTINIANS DURING HIS US VISIT.

2. FINANCIAL TIMES STORY IMMEDIATELY ATTRACTED ATTENTION OF TWO REFUGEE MEMBERS OF THE OLD IRAQI JEWISH COMMUNITY, MESSRS. N. E. DANGOOR AND M. S. BASRI, WHO, ON THE BASIS OF THIS STORY, CALLED ON EMBOFF MORNING OF NOVEMBER 13.

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THEY STATED THAT A "WORLD CONFERENCE OF JEWS FROM ARAB

COUNTRIES" WOULD BE HELD AT THE PLM HOTEL IN PARIS NOVEMBER 24-25. THEY STATED THAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD REPRESENT TWO MILLION JEWISH REFUGEES FROM ARAB COUNTRIES, AND THAT IT IS INTENDED TO CONSTITUTE A REPLY TO THE PALESTINIAN ARAB REFUGEE CLAIMS. THEY ASKED IF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE COULD SEND AN OBSERVER TO THE CONFERENCE. THEY STATED THAT ANY COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO ORGANIZING SECRETARY, WORLD CONFERENCE OF JEWS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES, HOTEL PLM, 71 BOULEVARD ST. JACQUES, PARIS 41057. WE SAID WE WOULD RELAY THEIR REQUEST TO THE DEPARTMENT, BUT MADE NO COMMITMENT.

3. DANGOOR THEN RAISED A PROPOSAL, WHICH HE HAD PREVIOUSLY COMMUNICATED TO THE EMBASSY, FOR A FEDERATION OR REGIONAL ORGANIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, COMPRISING ARABS AND ISRAELIS ALONG WITH JEWISH, ARMENIAN, KURDISH AND OTHER MINORITIES THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE EAST. HE ALSO PROPOSED PUBLICIZING SOME FORM OF OFFSET CLAIMS BETWEEN JEWISH REFUGEES FROM ARAB COUNTRIES AND PALESTINIAN ARAB REFUGEES FROM ISRAEL. HE REQUESTED EMBOFF TO ARRANGE AN APPOINTMENT FOR HIM TO CALL ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SAUNDERS TO PRESENT HIS PLAN BEFORE THE CONVOKING OF THE NOVEMBER 24 CONGRESS IN PARIS. DANGOOR STATED THAT, ALTHOUGH HE IS STATELESS, HE HAS ALREADY VISITED THE US AND WOULD EXPECT NO DIFFICULTY IN RENEWING HIS VISA. HE WOULD TRAVEL AT HIS OWN EXPENSE. HE HAS NOT CONTACTED THE FCO.

4. EMBOFF, AFTER SUMMARIZING US POLICY, REPLIED THAT MR. DANGOOR IS FREE TO SEEK THE APPOINTMENT WITH MR. SAUNDERS OR HIS COLLEAGUES, AND OFFERED TO TRANSMIT A SPECIFIC REQUEST FOR SUCH AN APPOINTMENT NOW. HOWEVER, EMBOFF ADVISED AGAINST MR. DANGOOR'S TIMING, SINCE THE NOVEMBER 24 CONFERENCE IS ALMOST UPON US. EMBOFF SUGGESTED THAT MR. DANGOOR SPELL OUT HIS PROPOSAL IN DETAIL IN WRITING, SO THAT WE COULD TRANSMIT IT TO THE DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT COULD THEN INFORM MR. DANGOOR WHETHER IT WISHES TO PURSUE THE ISSUE WITH HIM IN WASHINGTON. FURTHERMORE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE REACTION OF THE PARIS JEWISH CONFERENCE TO HIS PLAN BEFORE PURSUING THE

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MATTER FURTHER. MR. DANGOOR ACCEPTED EMBOFF'S SUGGESTION. MEANWHILE, WE WILL POUCH MR. DANGOOR'S FIRST LETTER TO NEA/IAI, AS WELL AS SUBSEQUENT WRITTEN COMMUNICATION FROM HIM.

5. COMMENT: MR. DANGOOR WAS ARTICULATE AND APPEARED TO BE WELL EDUCATED, PARTICULARLY IN HISTORY, BUT SOMEWHAT VISIONARY.

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